

THE ISLE OF DREAMS

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PEARL L. NORTON



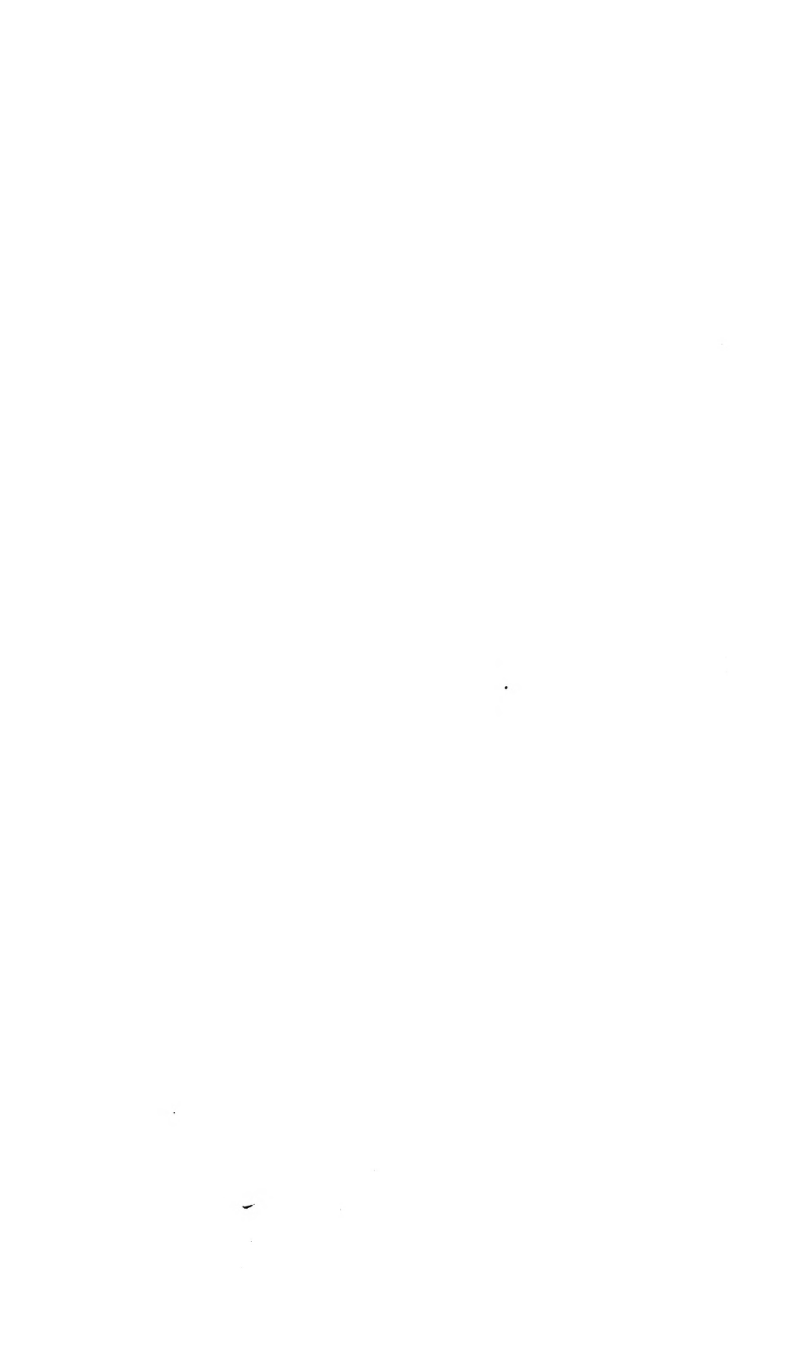
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THE ISLE OF DREAMS

PEARL L. NORTON

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Omaha, Nebraska

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TO MY MOTHER

PRESS OF
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THE ISLE OF DREAMS

Violet and crimson and gold,
Melted into a rosy maze,
As the sunset, dying, lingered,
And was met by the twilight haze.

And never a sound broke that sea-shore calm,
Save the wavelets that splashed on the sand;
And never a being of human shape,
Lived on that lovely island.

Why is that beauty sequestered
In that silent land, so lone?
Why—'Tis the Island of Dreams, dear,
And only to dreamers is shown.

The poet has seen, and the artist,
The beauteous visions there;
But no pessimist or cynic
Ever entered that island fair.

A path thru the forest leads inland.
And the glow of the sunset bright,
Filtering thru the leaf-hung trees,
Makes a net-work of golden light.

The glistening towers of a palace—
The palace of Dreams—uprise
'Gainst the soft blue sky in the distance,
Steeped in the sunset dyes.

This palace is built of sea-shells,
As delicate, lovely, and pink,
As the dainty petal of a wild rose grown
On some fern-strewn streamlet's brink.

And, so, 'tis said, here the poets
Gather their fancies of thought;
And no poet ever succeeded
Till he first this palace sought.

A fountain, banked round with fern leaves,
Is leaping and splashing their stems,
And the sunset is kissing the white spray
And turning its waters to gems.

There they seem rubies all glowing,
Here opals, gleaming with light,
Their iridescent beauty
Mingled with emeralds bright.

The sky casts a turquoise glory
The sparkling waters o'er,
Till the fount seems to teem with color,
As never waters before.

There are gardens of wonderful flowers,
And rare, sweet-smelling plants,
And a fairy moss-grown arbor,
Where the white owl sits and chants.

And when in the pure white moonlight,
This fairy isle is bathed,
The poet and the artist find anew
That beauty which they craved.

The nightingale will sing its heavenly song,
Where the dew-hung lilies nod,
And the white acacia blossoms
Smile down at the velvet sod.

Then come with me, dear, to that fair isle
Where beauty runs rife all the year;
We can board the good ship "Dreamland,"
And sail without ever a fear.

A LOVE LYRIC.

A poet fell adreaming once in June,
And dreamed he was in quest of Cupid's home.
His thoughts went hand-in-hand with Fancy gay,
Who guided him lest he should roam,
From out the love-wrought way.
His footsteps fell all noiseless on a path
Flanked close on one side by a land
Of velvet greenness, daisy-flecked, and on
The other ran a stream by white rocks spanned.
These limpid languid waters in their lace-fern bed
Showed the dimpled blue of heaven
As they smiled; and overhead
The blue sky smiled in turn.
Sometimes a tiny tinkling sound he heard
As the dripping rocks were splashed,
And once an infant rainbow poised
And iridescent flashed.
He passed thru fairy woodlands rich in all
The youthful loveliness of Spring,
As fair as the Elysian Fields of old,
And fragrant with the honeyed sweets that fling
Themselves upon the soft winds roaming dreamily.

And so he passed, the poet, wondering,
And drowsy-eyed, till gradually
A soft, sweet languor came.
He dropped upon a mossy mound and soon
Was slumbering there 'midst leaf and bloom
Of that fair woodland and a hush swift flew
Upon the place and like a tomb,
Its silent beauty grew.
And soon sweet sounds of lyre-lipped melody
Awoke the poet from his sleep;
And so he lay and listened to such strains
Of music that set all his pulse aleap.
And then he rose and listening stood, and dripping
 pure
Like smooth drops of molten pearl,
Softly the music sobbed, and then the lure
Of melody grew still.

A mist of silver meshes then arose,
And the sunlight gleamed and glanced;
The poet turned his eyes upon a knoll
Where the dew on the greensward danced
Like gems on an emerald bowl.
And there a silver-latticed arbor stood,
And half-embraced by blushing roses gleamed,

A fragrant, dainty blend of silv'ry pink.
He nearer drew and stood it seemed
Before the door of Beauty's own domain.
For there, within, upon a bed
Of flushed rose petals, lay the god
Of Love and Lovers, fast asleep; and shed
By passing sunbeams, yellow glints of light
Were in scintillating glances,
Making all the arbor bright.
A cherub nestled close beside the couch,
And now and then he touched his lyre sweet;
While snowy doves flew in and out and dropped
Fair offerings of flowers at Cupid's feet.
The while the poet stood entranced, he saw
The sleeper's eyelids ope, and square
He looked into Love's eyes, and saw
An answering smile of gladness,
Well up in their clear depths fair.

So the poet found his Cupid,
And sweet his dream to him.
For he found there an inspiration,
Not new, but never dim.
And this it is—that always,
For every soul there dreams

A Cupid in a rosy bower,
To be wakened when the gleams
Of answering love are roused.
And if no love comes surging
From that other heart to yours,
Then the Cupid still is dreaming
On that other heart's calm shores.

SPRING.

A softer note of crooning
In the wafted scent-hung breeze,
As if translating lyrics,
Sung on languorous southern seas.

Above, the azure sky, white-flecked,
Below, the dainty flush
Of fragrant petaled orchards
'Neath the sun's warm kiss a-blush.

The Pipes o' Pan resounding sweet,
The song of a bird on the wing;
God's breath of peace descending,
And saying, "This is Spring."

THE HOURS.

(From a Painting)

Around a limpid pool they met,
Closed in by a leafy screen;
Four maidens, their pale figures set
Like cameos 'gainst the green.

The Dawn lay lengthwise on the sward,
Her yellow hair astream,
Her blue eyes, like fringed gentians, toward
The azure heav'ns adream.

And that exotic beauty, Noon,
Red-lipped, full-bosomed, leaned
And gazed at her own loveliness,
That in the pool's depths gleamed.

And Twilight, dusky-eyed and fair,
Sweet courier of the moon,
Sat twining roses in her hair,
And smiled the while at Noon.

And one there stood, a figure pale,
Against a bank of bloom,
With lovely brooding eyes that veil
Midnight's mysterious gloom.

IN AN ARTIST'S STUDIO.

Polished gleam of oak twixt velvet-
Textured rugs from Eastern lands,
Scent of sandal-wood and roses,
Tapestries from skillful hands.

Gleam of marble—Aphrodite,
Juno, and pale Niobe—
And upon the walls the faces
Of a painted company.

Knights and ladies, monks and fools there,
Beggars, kings, and water-sprite,
And o'er all shines down serenely
Softly shaded, changing light.

DRIFTING.

Oh, let the oars be still, dear,
And let us drift atune,
Over the silvered shimmering lake,
That quivers 'neath the moon.

And let our hearts be one, dear,
As faint the melody
Of distant singers, floating comes
Wafted to you and me.

For, ah, the summer night, dear,
Is witchery, and strong
The scented night-wind's now on us,
With youth and sings youth's song.

VIOLETS.

A purple mass with dainty breath,
Like a royal offering given
To some fair queen of olden time,
Whose soul is now in Heaven.

Soft, with the dew-drops upon them,
Glittering like gems on their breast;
Breathing a message to dear ones,
That is even now half-guessed.

SUMMER.

Summer is not a timid maid,
To blush before our eyes,
But a woman, mature, with the power to lure
In the season of sunny skies.
Voice of a siren, honey-sweet,
That sings upon a breeze,
That is heavily hung with the songs that are sung
By the nymphs of the southern seas.
Lips like a red, red rose and they
Are clinging close to earth ;
And the beautiful eyes of Summer are wise,
Tho' they seem but to mirror mirth.
For ne'er will she stay till her lovers grow weary,
And seek a fair mistress anew ;
But with song on her lips and her arms full of
flowers,
She wafts us a kiss and "Adieu."

A LULLABY.

Soft sighs the night-wind,
Crooning a song ;
Angels watch o'er thee,
And a mother's love strong.

High in the Heavens,
Night's lanterns gleam,
Slumber, my darling,
And sweet be thy dream.

A MANSION OF OLD.

It stands upon a wind-swept hill,
With an avenue of pines,
Leading up to the balconied porch,
Shadowed by moulding vines.
Its roof is frail and blown with age,
And its staring windows seem
Peep-holes into a darkened Past,
Fit for a Bogie's dream.

But once these rooms, re-echoed now,
By the breezes' plaintive sigh,
Rang with the laughter and voices of youth,
Silent now for years gone by.
The maidens of a hundred years,
With faces bright with youth,
Tripped merrily down to the wide old hall,
Quaint as an old-time booth.

Around the red-bricked fireplace wide,
When the night was dark and cold,
Stories of love and stories of war,
Each with their charm were told.

The hound, a favored inmate there
On the hearth-rug stretched and dreamed,
Too, there were baskets of woodland nuts,
Nearby the cognac steamed.

And then, perchance, the squire took down
From its resting place nearby,
His worn old fiddle that could give
Sweet strains that the night-wind s sigh.
Each merry maiden tripped the dance,
And each laughing glance was held
Fast in the mirror of Time's clutching hand,
As louder the music swelled.

And then when darkness folded all,
And the lights no longer shone,
Dancing figures of nimble shade
Fell on the lone hearth-stone.
I think, sometimes, the Fates will keep
Watch o'er this trophy of Time,
And each by-gone thought and act will swathe
From this hurrying age's grime.

A FOG FANTASY.

The fog creeps 'round me like the hand
Of a phantom, strangling strong,
Its clammy breath is in my face,
And silent it creeps along.

Strange thoughts come surging thru my brain,
I can fancy that that the way
That lay beyond the River Styx,
Was swathed in such mists of grey.

I peer into the shrouding gloom,
But the fog shuts out the light:
And mist to mist and fog to fog,
It circles its embrace tight.

But when the sun all royally,
Comes again into his own,
he scared mists rise and vanish as
The thieves 'neath the master's frown.

And then how fair the world appears,
With its mantle of sunny light,—
'Tis the contrast of a murky pool,
With a spring-time brooklet bright.

And so in life our good deeds shine,
'Gainst the blackness of our sins,
And the blessed light of Heaven shows
Where the division-line begins.

DORIS.

That first day she came to the studio asking for work, The Artist was gloomily contemplating the canvas before him. In no way did it embody his idea. He looked up suddenly and saw her standing there in the doorway, a little thing, shabbily dressed, and with the breath of the April mist shining on her hair. In that one glance The Artist noted the wide brown eyes, soft as a fawn's, the child-like contour of the cheek and throat, and straightway he asked her name. "Doris," she had answered in a voice like a sweet-toned bell. The Artist had smiled at the child-like answer. "Just Doris, please," she had repeated. And "Doris" she remained, while The Artist congratulated himself on his good fortune in discovering so exquisite a model.

Doris never spoke of her life outside the studio and The Artist's friends, as well as himself, respected her reticence. "She has her reasons probably," The Artist often said. The rain-drenched days of April passed and May came. Doris used to open the southern windows of the studio and let in the mild breeze while she posed.

The shrill discords of wrangling little sparrows, whirring about the window, seemed to give her infinite pleasure. When the long sunny days of June came The Artist closed the studio and bade good-bye to Doris. He did not ask her plans and she told him nothing.

It was late October when The Artist came back from his long playtime and opened the studio again. The morning of the second day of his return, Doris opened the door and came softly in as if she had been gone hours instead of months. Her face was a little paler than before, but The Artist noted that she was lovelier; scarcely less child-like, but still more womanly. The Artist was bubbling with enthusiasm. He confided his plans to Doris as they sat in the topsy-turvy studio, with the morning sun throwing a multitude of tints upon them from the great rose-window in the east. The Artist was to begin work upon what he was confident was to be his masterpiece. He would use no models, for it was to be a purely impressionistic work. And, too, he was to be married at Christmas, and his fiancée was to come twice a week now to sit for her portrait. He would not need Doris unless some special work should demand a model. His whole time would be taken up

with the portrait and the picture. However, Doris might call when she liked. When The Artist had finished, Doris smiled her slow smile, and, giving him her hand, went away.

The studio was a very gay place, indeed, that winter. Parties of The Artist's friends took possession of it at times and transformed it with their gay chatter and music. Doris came to the studio twice, but each time she found The Artist shut in his little room off the studio, where he was working madly away at his two treasures. When she knocked softly at the door and called, "It is I—only Doris," he told her abruptly that there was nothing for her and to please go away like a good child. After that Doris never came again and The Artist seemed almost to have forgotten her.

On Christmas Eve the studio was dark and silent, for The Artist was to be married at St. Stephen's at eight o'clock. Wrapped in her modest little gray cloak with her brown curls swathed in a filmy scarf of blue, Doris sat at the back of the church and saw the ceremony. When the last of the wedding-party had trailed out of the church, and the guests were surging down the aisles, Doris slipped out and hurried towards the studio building. Laboriously she

toiled up three flights of stairs, for the lift had long since stopped. Her hand was trembling as she inserted the slender key and fumbled with the door in the darkness. It opened at last, and she groped with outstretched hands for the electric switch and found it. Then with a little catch in her breath she looked about her, her quick gaze noting each familiar object.

Swiftly she crossed to the door of The Artist's little work-room and opened it. The light from the studio streamed upon the two canvases that represented the toil of so many weeks. The smaller of the two was uncovered and Doris stood before it with clenched hands, her eyes devouring it moodily. This was what she had come, like a thief in the night, to see. It was the portrait of The Artist's lady. Each stroke of The Artist's brush had spoken truly, and it was the picture of a girl, fair and womanly, on which Doris looked. In her concentration, Doris had clutched at something on the high stool beside the picture, and was turning it over and over in her hand. She looked down at it at last, and into her eyes crept a gleam of infinite malice, not unmingled with grief. She held in her hand The Artist's heavy palette knife. With a half-

fearful glance behind her Doris raised the knife that could ruin at one stroke the love-wrought portrait of The Artist's lady. For an instant the knife remained poised, and then the hand that held it dropped. Doris's eyes were strangely drawn towards the huge white canvas that held The Artist's masterpiece.

She became suddenly possessed to remove the covering and look upon The Artist's last great work. Still clinging to the knife, she swiftly pushed aside the covering and the pale yellow light fell upon the picture. With a little cry of wonder, Doris fell upon her knees before the picture, and the knife clattered to the floor. Truly it was The Artist's masterpiece. It told the story of the Blessed Happiness of the Holy Family, and as Doris looked, her eyes were dimmed with sudden tears. For the face of the Mother of Jesus, was HER face—the face of Doris. The soft outlines, the faultless coloring, the very expression, all were there,—glorified by The Artist's conception of the Divine Motherhood. For a long time Doris knelt before the picture, one thought repeating itself over and over in her mind,—“It was MY face he saw, as he worked,—not hers,—mine.” And then she would smile slowly, wonder-

ingly, and think it all over again. The great clock in the studio chimed the hour of ten, and roused her from her reveries. With caressing hands, Doris covered the great picture and turned to go. At the door she looked back and saw the portrait of The Artist's lady smiling at her. And then the studio was dark again and Doris was gone,—gone out into the night as quickly, as silently, as she had come into the studio that first day. And no one knows of Doris, neither whom she was, nor where she went. But The Artist's masterpiece hangs in the Grand Salon, with the face of Doris smiling down from it.

AMBITION.

It is not given to all to do
A deed of deathless fame,
But naught can stay the least of us
From pure and lofty aim.

The man who lets a day go by,
Without a vision seen
Of something nobler. Lo,—that man
Has soiled that day's page, clean.

If every goal, high-placed, could lure
But one step up each day,
How short would seem the journey's length,
Although a life-long way.

SUNRISE ON THE PRAIRIE.

The rosy morn comes dancing o'er the waste
Of tangled grasses tall;
Her gilded shafts of sunlight flash,
As on the dew they fall.

The sky is like a sea-shell,
All pearly-tinted fair,
And an infant breeze awakened,
Murmurs plaintive on the air.

The regal disk that rises
Above the faint sky-line,
Looks down on this fair dominion,
As if to say, "'Tis mine."

And this is the prairie sunrise,
When the day awakes from sleep;
When the sun grows bright, then brighter,
And the gray mists sky-ward creep.

SUNSET ON THE PRAIRIE.

Amber and crimson and blue,
With violet lights between;
And a hint of the coming nightfall,
Softly dimming the sunset sheen.

Above, the Orient splendor,
Below, the western plain,
Stretching away to the skyline,
As over a boundless main.

The faint herb-scented breezes
Pass lightly o'er the ground,
And kiss the heads of the grasses,
That in tangled heaps abound.

And this is the western prairie,
When the day is tired unto death,
And pillowing her head in the sunset,
Slumbers with quiet breath.

ODE TO DIANA.

Nocturnal maiden, goddess fair,
To whom the ancients offered prayer,
In thy silvery robes of light,
And thy chariot of the Night,—
Whither bound and what thy guidance
'Long the pathways of the sky?
If perchance, your eyes grew wearied
Of the strange celestial sight,
Would you pause and rest a moment
On some fleecy cloudlet's height?
Or, without a single pausing,
Or a halting in thy flight,
Would you keep within the misty
Pearly roadway of the Night?

NIGHT.

Soft falls the veil of night,
O'er the varied scenes of earth;
Over the souls that are grieving,
Over the children of mirth.

Casting its shadows o'er sages,
And those who have life's path to tread;
Glancing at poverty's victims,
And those on whom riches are shed.

Deeper and darker the shadows,
Still the evening breeze,
Gently the tree-tops are swaying,
All is wrapt in night's diocese.

AUTUMN.

Soft haze and scented wind,
And banks of golden rod ;
And purple thistles, nodding high,
Above the lush green sod.

Half-clothed in colors gay,
The trees like shrinking maids,
Turn slim arms out against the wind's
Caress adown the glades.

A hint of sadness, too,
Is borne upon the air.
The crooning wind is like a dirge,—
A requiem for the fair.

THE EXILE.

Oh, let me return to the Homeland,
List!—I hear those voices clear,
Singing the songs of my country,
Those songs I hold so dear.

Sometimes I dream of the Homeland,
And see the long green lane,
With the whispering trees along it,
And my heart grows sick with pain.

In dreams I tread in the Homeland,
And my weary heart gains peace.
Dear faces all around me—
God—when will my exile cease?

And then I wake and slowly,
The hideous present leers
Its mocking face before me,
And I struggle with the tears.

The pain is bitter, bitter,
And I've waited, oh, so long.
I wonder why the years lag,
And so my life prolong?

Oh, take me back to the Homeland,
And safe there, I'll be blest,
By the sight of my own country,
Before my day of rest.

SEMPER FIDELIS.

We climbed a mountain path together 'neath a sky
Of softest azure with the scent of pines
Around us like sweet Nature's incense flung
From that calm altar high.

We stood and listened and together heard the fall
Of purling hidden waters, hastening fast
Adown some mossy crevice and a peace
Descended over all.

Up to the high and rocky ledge we climbed, and
gazed
Upon a dozen peaks with snowy heads:
And far below the lake's bright blue was spread
Beneath the sun's gilt rays.

In that cold clime, the icy hand of winter blast,
Nor yet the melting kisses of the sun,
E'er change the awesome faces of these guards,
All faithful to the last.

MONASTERY BELLS

Sweet voiced, silvery voiced bells,
Ah, their music as it swells,
Speaks of quiet cloistered life,
Where no struggle and no strife
Can abide.

Clear voiced pealings of the bells,
Coming from the chapel quells
All the harsh unlovely sound
Of the cities all around,
And peace abides.

SUMMER TWILIGHT.

The golden time, the dearest hour
Of all the day is here.
The vague sweet scents of grass and flower
Come in my window near.

The sun in gorgeous beauty slept
An hour ago, and now
Fair Venus, shining-eyed, has crept
To her high throne, aglow.

The beauty of the hour brings thought
That's close akin to pain,
A melody within me wrought
Cries to be heard again.

I touch the keys and as I play
That sweet, sweet melody
Comes blending softly with the day
That's going, and to me

A peaceful thought, almost a prayer,
A wonder at the ways
Of Mother Nature, just as fair
In night-times as in days.

THE LITTLE ACTS OF LIFE.

It is not much to give—a smile
To drive a tear away;
A hand outstretched with friendly clasp
Upon a gloomy day.

The greeting given in morning hours,
The good-night kiss,—the look
That makes some eye reflect its light
Like sun upon a brook.

'Tis all these things, so quietly done,—
The little acts of life,
That help us somehow to forget
The sorrows and the strife.

CHANSON DE LA LUNE.

She hung full-orbed and golden o'er the night,
Like some quaint lamp of Heavenly workmanship.
A little cloud of fleecy floating white
Was creeping like a timid swain to slip
His arms about his love.

And all below was bathed in mystic light,
A silver rain down-falling on the green ;
The cups of nodding lilies show the sheen
Of moonlight brushed o'er satin petals white,
As snowy as a dove.

The myriad grass-folk tune their violins,
The humming-bird darts crooning o'er the rose,
The dreamer sings a song of love. Soft blows
The amorous southern wind. And so begins
The song to Dian above.

A MEMORY.

Only a faded rose,
Held once in Somebody's hand,
Rousing a thousand longings
By Memory's breezes fanned.
Back in the webhung cloisters
Of the ever-echoed past,
Surging thoughts are imprisoned,
By the chains of Time held fast.
Oh, little rose, you're all that's left
Of that golden time, for he
Who held you once has crossed the bar
Of Life's tempestuous sea.

UNKNOWN.

There hangs in the dim old castle
Of a long forgotten Sire,
The portrait of a Lady,
Her name in Forgetfulness' mire.

Strangers, gazing upon it,
Are awed by the lovely face,
Soft as a child's in expression,
Regally fair in its grace.

There, with the pale light about her,
Framed in the hangings rare,
She seems like a vision of ages,
Apart from this worldly glare.

Nobody knows of the tumultuous thoughts
That surged in that unknown heart;
Nobody knows of the soul she possessed,
Or the sphere of which she was a part.

Softly the amber sunlight
Filters thru the gloom,
Resting with seeming caresses,
On the portrait of that room.

HOPE.

Wand'ring one day o'er the fields of Time,
The Fates found a sunbeam fair,
Lying alone, 'midst the shattered aims
Of ages of human despair.

The lonely sunbeam cast its light
Over the gloomy scene,
Striving to brighten the darkened way
And find some good to glean.

So they lifted it gently and sent it out
To the struggling world of care,
That its light might shine on a toiler's soul,
And help it its trials to bear.

The little sunbeam was christened "Hope,"
It lives in the world today;
And 'long the path to Happiness,
Its clear light shows the way.

THE ROSARY OF SAN JUAN

It was noon in the Padre's garden. The sun shone upon the white walls, and the crimson flowers near the little fountain looked like a splash of blood. It was very still in the garden, too. The Padre never came there at that time of the day.

Miguel lay on his back upon the shady strip near the outer wall. His hat was over his eyes, but he was not asleep. All night before he had played and played and now not a peso remained. Hence he had come into the Padre's little garden to think.

The insects in the crimson flowers droned lazily and the hour went by. Miguel threw his hat from his face and with a soft curse, arose. His black eyes looked sullenly at the little church across the way. He looked long at that little church and slowly there crept over his dark face, a look, half of determination and half of fright.

Miguel crossed the deserted street and entered the Church of San Juan. As the door closed behind him, he stood for a moment in an attitude of listening. The place was very still, as quiet as a tomb.

Directly before him was the font of holy water and above it hung the famous Rosary of San Juan. It was wrought of gleaming pearl and silver,—a relic of the first Catholic fathers, the founders of San Juan Mission.

Miguel knew the reverence and love the villagers and the Padre had for the rosary, and he also knew it to be worth many pesos. On the other side of the Sierras it could be turned into a small fortune. A sound of steps within the church caused Miguel to start and glance about the vestibule. Then quickly he reached out his hand toward the Rosary of San Juan, and in another moment he fled wildly from the church.

At seven o'clock in the evening the breeze sprang up from over the mountains, the soft twilight began to descend, and the fragrance of the crimson flowers in the Padre's garden stole langorously upon the air. The good Padre himself roused from his quiet revery in his dusky garden, and slowly crossed the street to his little church, as the vesper bell sounded with calm and deliberate sweetness. His people—his children, he loved to call them—were gathering for the vesper service and the Padre had scarcely time to don his cassock in his little study in the rear of the

church when his people burst in upon him, wide-eyed and breathless. The blessed Rosary of San Juan was gone! Some one with the devil's own spirit had stolen it away! Might the Virgin's curse descend upon him! With a gesture of quiet authority the Padre lifted his hand and enjoined silence. And they followed him quietly enough back into the church and knelt for service, awed by the Padre's calmness.

When the simple service was over, the Padre stood before his people and spoke. The waxen tapers flared on either side of him and the simple altar with its images of the Savior and the Mother Mary, gave a fitting background for the stately figure of the old Padre with his snowy hair and calm blue eyes. "The blessed Rosary of San Juan, the relic used by the founders of San Juan, has been stolen, you say. Do not fear, for the curse of remorse will surely be upon him who has thus defiled the holy relic. Return to your homes and pray that the morning may bring to us the Rosary of San Juan." And they went out quietly while the Padre knelt before the altar, and then extinguishing the tapers, returned to his garden.

The garden was a place of exquisite beauty now. The mellow crescent of the young moon rode in the

velvety darkness of the sky and peeped with a pale light over the trees into the garden, half-lighting the place into a fairy-like loveliness. The odor of the flowers hung on the soft night-wind, and a restless bird chirped sleepily in its nest. For a long time the Padre sat and mused on the disappearance of the Rosary of San Juan.

Out in the desert land that lay to the west of San Juan, the stars, in their velvety canopy, seemed very far away. It was quiet, too, with the uncanny quietness of the waste places of the earth. Sometimes a reptile went scurrying by with a dry rustling sound, and once a bird, with a harsh, unlovely cry, flew swiftly toward the east.

A man stood as still as a man of stone and his eyes stared into the half-light about him. It was early—not yet nine o'clock. Miguel was not happy. He held in his hand the precious Rosary of San Juan and the pale moonlight struck it now so that it glistened like a silver rope. The pearl and silver crucifix hung pendant in the moonlight and with a cry Miguel shut his hand over it. It seemed to him that the Figure of silver cast its anguished eyes reproachfully up at him. He unclosed his hand and again the swinging cross harassed him with vague

fear. He shut his eyes suddenly and thrust the rosary into his shirt and ran blindly towards San Juan.

When he reached the little town it was almost midnight, but he did not realize his weariness. The little moon had long since disappeared and in the darkness and stillness of the southern night he reached the church of San Juan. The door of that little church was always open and Miguel stealthily entered. It was darker here than outside, but Miguel had known the place since boyhood. He stood a moment before the font uncovered and felt gropingly for the silver hook that always held the rosary. With a muttered prayer, Miguel went out into the blackness of the night.

And when the morning sun came slanting thru the high window of the vestibule, it rested on the gleaming silver of the Rosary of San Juan.

LA FAVORITA.

I saw the calm awakening of the morn,
When rosy mists crept up to kiss the sun,
That seemed a thing of beauty, born
At dawn, and quiet as a nun.

I saw the opal sunset flood the sky,
And glow along the low horizon line,
Where color seemed to spring to life and die
A death of beauty, exquisitely sublime.

Again I stood beside the rippled evening sea,
And saw the young moon rise above the waste;
I heard the tiny wavelets laugh with glee,
And coquette with each wandering breeze they
faced.

But all these scenes before me fade away,
My ideal reigns my heart alone, supreme.
Its loveliness returns again to play
Upon my heart-strings when I dream.

Winter-all the midnight heavens bright
With winking stars, and where the hill-top merges
Into sky, a fir tree keeps its watch with light
Of stars and night-wind crooned dirges.

IN OLD MADRID.

In old Madrid, in a balcony hid
By clustering vines of roses,
A dark-eyed girl with a coquettish curl,
Sits and strums on an old guitar.

'Tis sweet Marie, who waits for me,
In the gray old chateau there.
In the light of the moon, she will softly croon,
And the moonbeams will play in her hair.

When the poplars throw their shadows low,
I will softly creep to the stair,
And serenade the pretty maid,
Who is slumbering without care.

Oh, sweet Marie, your smile to me,
Is worth a Kingdom's gold.
Your laughing glance holds me in a trance,
And makes my love fourfold.

THE STORM.

The sea roared round like a maddened thing,
The scurrying clouds hung dark,
The lurid light of a storm at sea
Hovered over the little bark.

The streaks of fiery lightning sent
The light upon each face.
Two sailor lads, young sturdy lads,
With the wild waves rowed a race.

The white-capped waves into billows grew,
And dashed o'er the small frail craft,
The moon peeped once from a blackened cloud,
And it seemed to them she laughed.

Their hope and strength began to wane
They gave themselves to Fate,
Then, suddenly the tossing mass
Seemed strangely to abate.

Again they seized the slippery oars,
And threw away their fear,
They pulled again for that beacon bright,
That told that help was near.

When almost there, the wind arose
Like a wakened beast from sleep,
It tore the surging clouds again
And furrowed thru the deep.

The waters seized the lagging oars,
And dashed them from their grasp,
They heard the frenzied wind shriek past,
Their boat went sailing fast.

A sea-bird, searching shelter, gave
Its rasping cry and they
Felt that they were not alone
'Midst that wind and spray.

The morning sun rose, calm and clear,
As if no storm had raged
The night before, and made the sea
Like a rebel spirit uncaged.

The keeper of the lighthouse scanned
The dancing waters o'er;
His glass defined an object small,
On the rocks where the sunbeams pour.

A rescuing boat, well-manned and strong,
Came to the broken bark,
Cast on those barren ragged rocks,
Like a wounded fallen lark.

And there on those cruel rocks they saw
As if shrinking from their watery graves,
Two staring lifeless forms that told
Of battle with the waves.

That evening as the rosy sun
Rippled on the evening sea,
Two sailor lads were laid to rest,
Safe in their own country.

THE OLD, OLD THEME.

'Twas eve in the old cathedral,
The music master dreamed
At his dear beloved organ.
How the waxen tapers gleamed!

The dim aisles seemed like pathways
Leading to a better life,
As they lead up to the altar,
With its image of the Strife.

And each gleaming marble statue,
In its niche with curtains drawn,
Silent stood, as pale as cloud-mist
That one sees at dawn.

But the music master sitting
In that sepulchral haze,
Took no sight of his surroundings,
For his thoughts were in a maze.

Softly his trembling hands, touching
The sweet-voiced organ keys,
Wove a symphony of music,
But he was 'cross the seas.

He was dreaming of the spring-time
Of his life, when first he met
The woman of his first love,
With her soft hair, black as jet.

Dark eyes shone like dusky star-lights,
Bloom of roses, pink and fair,
Blended with the lily's whiteness,
'Neath the wealth of shining hair.

And the music, swelling louder,
Filled his soul with peace divine,
Seemed to make the flickering tapers
With a new bright glory shine.

Thought spoke to thought, as upward
The floating music soared.
The sound as of many waters
'Round the music-master roared.

His head sank low and lower,
Till it sank upon his breast;
In the dim cathedral's vastness,
He had passed on to his rest.

A CHRISTMAS SKETCH.

It was the Christmas-tide in Dresden. Outside the night-wind moaned and wailed through the naked trees like a soul in agony. In an upper room, luxurious in its comfort, Franz von Alstedt, the composer, sat before an open fire, his head bent upon his hand, his now sightless eyes turned towards the dying coals. The room was dark save when some ember leaped to sudden life and gave out its ruddy short-lived light. At the further end of the room a boy was playing on a violin. The melody was a strange one for a child to choose, and it was played with an understanding that was marvelous. It began softly, tremulous with insistent pleadings; then grew stronger, but still holding those tones which had all the breathlessness of quickened heart-throbs, then faster and faster, till it seemed wild with passion and delirious joy. But when the finale came, it was sweet and low, and every lingering tone was a caress.

The smouldering fire awakened suddenly and its radiance made the room bright for an instant. The boy laid aside the violin and knelt at the composer's

knee. He was a fair lad of perhaps twelve years, with a pale pretty face and large questioning eyes of blue that seemed too grave for his young face. Von Alstedt's hand lay on the curly head, caressingly and he asked softly, "Would you have a story, liebchen? A story that would surely interest you?" The boy assented eagerly, and, resting his head on Von Alstedt's knee, he gave a little sigh of content.

"'Twas in the winter of 18—, nine years ago to-night, when I was playing in a Concerto in a Berlin theatre," began the old man, musingly. "The night was very dark and the sharp air cut me in the face on my way to the theatre. I found my fellow musicians already assembled when I arrived. In a short time the curtain rose. My number was the last on the first half of the programme. I went onto the stage, gazed into the sea of upturned faces and began to play. The piece was an Hungarian dance tune, full of strange cadences, and yet fraught with a soft, sweet melody suggesting Southern nights and heavy flower-laden air. When I had finished there was silence for a moment, and then a great storm of applause broke out. As an encore I played the 'Unfinished Symphony' and then, the

applause continuing, I gave them Beethoven's 'Moonlight Sonata' and bowed myself from the stage.

"When I left the theatre I found that the wind had risen and the moon was shedding a pale cold light over the sleeping city. Suddenly, as I hurried along, I heard, above the whistling wind, a cry—the cry of a child in distress. Again it reached me, nearer now it seemed. I stopped and peered about me. It was where two buildings tall and dark left a space between them, and there in the darkness crouched such a forlorn little creature that my heart went out to it and I took it in my arms. It was sobbing softly now and its little arms clung to me, the head of tangled curls nestling on my shoulder. I took the child home with me with the thought that on the morrow I should hear of some frantic mother searching for her little one. But the morrow came and went, week followed week, and no one claimed the child. So I kept him and called him 'Ernest'."

Without a word the boy went to the window and stood there, his forehead pressed against the cold glass. And then the Christmas chimes began. The voices of the bells soared upward in their joy,

reached a glorious climax, and then grew softer. Fainter and fainter the music floated till the air was calm and still again. After a time the boy gravely kissed the old man and went away. But Von Alstedt sat in his chair till the first streak of the Christmas dawn appeared. They found him there with a smile on his lips and peace written on his pallid brow. He had gone in the night and the morning found him in his Paradise.

THE WEAVING OF THE RAIN-BOW.

When black-eyed Cleopatra's barge,
With scented, silken sail,
Went drifting down the mirrored Nile,
Before a summer gale,
The arrant wind, with fingers bold,
Snatched up a flower rare
That twined its scarlet petals in
The slumbering Queen's dark hair.

A gondolier, his olive face,
Turned westward, plied his oar,
And straight into the sunset slipped,
And then was seen no more.
He went to find the yellow gold
That in the sunset lay,—
A wondrous, glittering treasure pile,
Heaped up at close of day.

There grew a tree on Java's isle,
With globules, orange-hued,
So-colored by the kissing lips,
Of Phoebus, in a mood

Of wilful tenderness. And one
Of these fair fruits was plucked
By wandering wood-folk, whom, they say,
The satyrs do instruct.

A sparkling emerald once was filched
From Persia's pea-cock throne,
And Shahs for decades have searched far
To find the won'drous stone.
Its light was as the light that shines,
In cool sea-caverns green.
But nevermore was found the gem,
That cast such glamorous sheen.

A sea-nymph twined a deep blue string
Of lapis lazuli,
Among her shimmering tresses wet
With salt spray of the sea.
And one blue stone slipped from her hand,
Into the waters bright;
That stone was never seen again,
By man nor water-sprite.

When blue-eyed Paris lay in death,
Upon his rich-hung bier,
His curves of icy beauty veiled
By clinging gauzes sheer,—

One scarf of violet tinted silk,
Was taken by that Queen
Of Love, fair Aphrodite, who
Then crept away, unseen.

The red from Cleopatra's flower ;
The yellow of the gold,
Which that young gendolier had brought,
From sunset wealth, untold.
The orange from exotic fruit,
That grew in tropic lands ;
The green from that bright pilfered gem,
Stolen by unknown hands ;
The blue from lapis lazuli—
Mother of ultramarine ;
The violet of silken scarf ;
All woven in a sheen.

And all these colors, blended, make
The arch of beauty, thrown
Upon the curtain of the sky ;
It is a promise shown
To us, who, gazing, see it blend
Into a perfect whole,—
A promise of a time to come
When man has reached his goal.

For that will be a perfect time,
When no man, race, nor creed,
Will set itself apart as if
It only were to lead.
But every man and every race,
And all religious strife,
Shall be together melted all
Into one faultless life.

IF DREAMS COME TRUE.

Give me the hum of silver-stringed harp,
Blent with a sliver song;
The dreamy perfume of a rose,
That blooms all summer long.
And bring to me the sheen of pearls,
Twined in with an opal's gleam;
And bring me silks of Orient weave,
Gold-threaded, rose and cream.
Too, bring the tranquil holy light
Of a summer evening star,
Together with a poet's scroll,
To waft me dreams from far.
And in a smiling morn in May,
Within a mountain glade
Set down these things, my genie slave,
And my Olympia's made.

INFELICE.

With a flirt of his wings of silken gauze,
A bee flew over the moor ;
His body was golden and velvet-brown,
And his song was sung to lure.

And a little white daisy with heart of gold,
Grew out in a wildwood place.
She saw the bee, heard his careless song,
And lifted her snowy face.

With a gay word of greeting the cavalier paused,
To speak with the daisy fair.
So, all the bright springtime, he met her each day,
And whispered sweet words, light as air.

One morn in the Junetime, the idler.
Flew over a garden wall ;
Into a garden of riotous beauty,
With stately lilies tall.

And there by the lilies grew one queenly rose,
As red as the lips of love.
“Ah, here is my fit mate,” the gay bee cried,
“As fair as the star-flowers above.”

The red rose listened and met his words,
With words well-nigh as sweet;
The bee forgot the daisy's voice,
Forgot her glance discreet.

He only lived to see the rose,
And speak with her each day;
The summer hours with langorous feet,
Slipped o'er old Time's pathway.

And then, one day to the garden fair,
Came the lover-bee in haste,—
He found the rose "en tete-a tete"
With a new love, White-Rose, chaste.

Then back to the woodland he quickly flew,
To seek out the daisy fair;
He looked for her far and he looked for her near,
But missed her everywhere.

"The little white daisy?" the West wind spoke,
"She mated yesterday,
With a soft-winged yellow butterfly,
From many miles away."

The summer and autumn passed too soon,
For the bee with the gauzy wings,
The cold rain of winter, relentless, came,
Heaping on him its icy stings.

And down midst the frozen grasses black,
'Neath a leaden sky, he lay,
With his velvet-brown coat all spotted and soiled,
And silent his song, once gay.

THE GHOST OF LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI.

Young Adrien La Garraye was born
In the south of sunny France,
Where the purpling vineyards ripen fast,
Beneath the sun's hot glance.

But La Garraye a dreamer was,
And one who loved to be
Adrift upon the waters of
His wandering Fancy's sea.

He entered a cavern at sunset once,
On the border land of sleep;
With thoughts all clothed in whimsical garb,
And pulses all aleap.

He pushed a fringed curtain back,
And gazed at a magic room,
All silent save for tinkling sounds
Of hidden fountains' tune.

The walls were hung with tapestries
Of rare and lustrous sheen,
The marble floor was laid with rugs—
'Twas a throne room for a queen.

In one far end, a window set
With jewels, flashing bright,
Cast o'er the lovely room below
A strange and wierd light.

And there between two mirrors pale,
Shadowed by palm leaves green,
Hung the portrait of a woman,
All alone amidst that scene.

He drew with soft steps the portrait near
And gazed on the beautiful face,
And a ray from the window flitting by,
Lit up each smiling grace.

He turned from his thoughts to the doorway,
And a woman wondrous fair,
The image of the portrait,
Smiling, serene, stood there.

She beckoned, he heard sweetest music,
And maidens beginning to sing,
He found himself on an ivory throne,
And he wore the crown of a king.

The room was golden with shining lights—
A banquet was served to him there,
Soft gleaming mirrors reflected
Silver and flowers rare.

He leaned from his throne to the woman,
As she half-reclined by him there.
He fastened a rose in her bodice,
And one in her shining hair.

Her red lips were heavy with kisses,
Her cheek was near to his breast,
And then, *mon Dieu*, on her forehead
In letters of fire was pressed—

“I am *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*”—
Young *Adrien* blindly fled,—
Fled from the cavern that held the ghost
Of that traitress, ages dead.

ECHOES.

That poppy that grew in your garden,
That poppy, silk-petaled and fair,
Lived only a day—then it faded,
But, ah, it was lovely while there.

That friend whom you loved in the years past,
Is gone now perhaps for aye,
But the mem'ry of that lost friendship,
Is with you sweet today.

That smile that you gave was fleeting,
'Twas gone in a moment and yet,
To the one who saw it, it lingers
As bright as the moment you met.

AL FRESCO.

To brush across my lips a satin spray
Of perfumed roses with the dew
Of summer rain upon them,—'tis one way
To get a little nearer to
 The best of life.

To be alone upon a mountain-side,
And hear no sounds by mortal made;
But tinkling hidden waters as they glide
O'er smooth white stones. I'll be repaid
 For aught of strife.

To be beside the rippled sea at eve,
And watch the full orb'd moon arise,
A silver globe of light,—ah, I believe
All beauty seen thru Nature's eyes
 Enobles life.

THE SOUTHERN WIND.

The southern wind in accents low,
One eve, sang a song to me ;
A lyric of golden sweetness,
Tinged with fantasy.

It sang of matchless sea-caves,
On the shores of a tropic isle,
Where dwell the sweet-eyed sea-nymphs,
Who sing all day a smile.

It told of a garden exotic,
Where the moonlight was silver white,
And the soft warm air was heavy
With the scent of flowers bright.

It sang of languorous countries,
Across wide seas from here—
Lands of haunting beauty,
Where 'tis summer all the year.

It called me with alluring voice.
To drift with it afar,
Till I should find myself at last
Before Fancy's gate ajar.

TO MY MUSE.

Come, gentle maiden, Muse divine,
Thou with the mystic smile and eyes ashine;
And lay thy finger tips
On my dumb lips.
Kiss thou my eyes that I may see
The dawning beauties of sweet fantasy;
Give me that inner sight,
That reaches light.
Ope thou my ears to Nature's tunes,
And in the dusky eves or sultry noons,
Let me interpret all
The melodies that fall.
Ah, let me write but one fair line,
That after I am gone will calmly shine,
Beside my name, ah, Muse,
Cans't thou refuse!

THE POET.

One who hears in the sea's low moan,
 A voice of mystery ;
Who sees a bee to a lily cling,
 And weaves a fantasy.
Who watches with a keen delight,
 The changing lights of sky,
And like a miser of fair things,
 Gloats with gleaming eye.
One who loves in the deep'ning dusk,
 To tell a rosary of stars,
And hear the night-wind's crooning voice,
 Singing from Venus to Mars.
Who feels the kissing lips of Spring,
 In fragrance on him pressed,
And in an ecstasy knows well,
 To live is to be blessed.

MY GARDEN.

There is a fairy city,
Hung tremulous in the air;
I visit it at sunset
And it is very fair.

It rests so lightly, softly,
Upon the sunset's breast,
Just like a tinted ship that sways,
Upon a sea, gem-drest.

Sometimes its towers, mosque-like,
Of shimmering pearl arise,
In Orient splendor and fair scenes,
Are spread before my eyes.

I walk, then, in my garden,
Of Persian loveliness,
Walled in by tiers of roses,
Whose perfumes on me press.

I hear the tinkling music
Of crystal fountains bright,
Aleap within their marble urns,
And while I watch, the light

Is changed from sunset's colors,
To twilight's purple dusk,
And thru the garden's dimness
There creeps the scent of musk.

It darker grows, I linger
Within that quiet bliss;
And then there creeps as softly,
As softly as a kiss,

The fretted moonlight thru the trees
Upon the fountains, till
The nightingale, awakened, 'gins
With melody to thrill.

And ere my senses have awaked,
From that garden's spell, full dear,
The darkness sweeps with blotting hand,
And wipes the bright sky clear.

And yet before my inner sight,
That Persian garden leaps,
Whene'er I see the sunset clouds
Merge into dusky deeps.

EVENING STAR.

Every eve I greet with homage,
That far star's tranquil light;
Like a pendant drop of water,
Trembling, crystal-like and white.

Mayhap 'tis the resting place of
Little souls in winged flight,
To the Paradise of children,
Land unknown, but no less bright.

Or, perhaps, those thoughts of poets,
Thoughts ne'er written, save in heart,
Heavenward fly and hang in cluster,
Radiant far than Dian's dart.

THE EMIGRANT.

From the North, from the East, West and languorous
South,
Come the children of nations, far separate till now
There's the fair Scandinavian, the blue-eyed Pole,
The hot blood of France, and, with swarthy brow,
The son of Italy.

Comes the Russian, dark-bearded, and doubtful-
glanced,
And the grave, dark-eyed child of that Eastern race
That has stood before others with forced-bent knee;
By his side, mayhap, German with ruddy face,
Or Britain, coldly calm.

And with faith and with hope and with longings,
too,
Come these children of fortune from alien lands,
And they bring all their customs, religions and
thoughts
To this land of the free with its promises rich, Ah—
the hands
Of Humanity here may clasp!

MY ROSARY.

A nun in a cloistered convent,
Knelt with her rosary,
And prayed the dear God that her soul
Might daily purer be.

And, so, thru the years, her fingers,
The shining beads caressed,
Till one little bead grew brighter
From much handling, than the rest.

And as thru my fingers is slipping,
My rosary of life,
Each day is a bead of memory,
That stands for joy or strife.

And when at the end of all this,
When the years have all been told,
The ones that will shine the brightest
Will be those that youth doth enfold.

REGRET?

Why must the Springtime vanish?
Why must the flower fade?
The bloom brush from the tinted peach,
And the grass sear in the shade?

Why must the brightest eye turn dull,
And the reddest lips grow pale?
The sweetest melody grow still,
And the fondest heart-hopes fail?

Still—the summer in gorgeous beauty
Will follow when spring days wane.
The tinted grape gives the perfumed wine,
And the grass will be green again.

The eyes that we love will never dull
For us, nor dear lips pale,
All melody has echoes sweet,
And hopes not always fail.

L' ENVOI.

And in the purple twilight, dear,
Our Dream Ship will return,
Its scented sail flung 'gainst the west
Where one great star doth burn.

And it shall bring a silver cask,
Called "Memory's Sacred Store,"
Bediamonded and with pearls set,
And full of Dreamland lore.

In it we'll find the dearest word
Of a converse long ago;
The sweetest lilt of music,
Half-forgotten, soft and low.

And, too, we'll find a dream-face,
With smiling eyes of blue,
That speaks the language of Dreamland,
A language old, yet new.

The fairest flower from Summer's hand,
The sweetest song of bird—
All, all ghosts of a perfect hour—
The cask holds all. And heard

Adown the corridors of Time,
In a chain of melody,
The echoes of these dreamlets float,
And weave a fantasy.

Go thou, my little dreamlets, poise
Thy untried wings for flight.
Go to the many-humored world,
Out of thy Island of Delight.

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